

Nicotine Replacement and Other Medications

- ❖ **Nicotine Patch:**
 - Apply in a clean, non-hairy place, above the waist in the morning.
 - Wear for 24 hours.
 - Change the site every day for 7 days.
 - Apply first patch the morning of quit day.
- ❖ **Nicotine Gum:**
 - Chew until your mouth tingles or you sense a pepper taste, then park between teeth and gum.
 - Re-chew as needed.
 - Use no more than 16-20/day.
 - Available at canteen at low cost.
- ❖ **Nicotine Lozenge**
 - Dissolves in mouth, do not chew.
 - Not in VA pharmacy.
- ❖ **Zyban:**
 - Take for 7-10 days before quitting to get adequate blood level.
 - Typically take 1 tab for 3-4 days, then 1 tab 2 times per day.
 - Non-nicotine
 - Reduces smoking urges.
- ❖ **What are additional resources?**
 - The PA Quitline 1-877-724-1090
 - American Heart Assoc 1-800-242-8721
 - American Lung Assoc 1-800-LUNG-USA
 - American Cancer Society 1-800-ACS-2345

Commonly Asked Questions

- ❖ **How are alcohol and substance use related to smoking cigarettes?**

Smoking cigarettes is highly associated with alcohol and drug use. Smokers who quit may be less likely to relapse to alcohol or drugs.
- ❖ **What are nicotine replacement medications?**

Nicotine replacement medications wean your body gradually from nicotine when you quit smoking. Zyban, a non-nicotine pill is also available at the VA. While these medications can reduce withdrawal symptoms, they do not help you change learned habit of smoking. Comprehensive smoking cessation programs address learned habit. **Talk to any of your medical providers about medications.**
- ❖ **What treatment programs are available?**
 - Individual brief or intensive counseling is available with any of your medical or mental health providers.
 - **The Smoking Cessation Group** at the Wilkes-Barre VA is an intensive behavioral counseling group designed to help you quit smoking and avoid relapse. It meets the 1st Tuesday (1:00-2:15 pm) of each month for 4 weeks and has at least 1 long-term follow-up appointment. For info call: 570-824-7665
 - If you cannot participate in one-on-one or group treatment at the VA, we recommend phone counseling at your home using the Pennsylvania Quitline at 1-877-724-1090

VetCanQuit: TIPS TO STOP SMOKING

VA Medical Center
Wilkes-Barre, PA

<http://www.va.gov/vamcwb>



Smoking Cessation Treatment Contacts:

Wilkes-Barre: 1-877-928-2621
Ellie Garavaglia, R.N., Treatment Coordinator
Helen Pan, Ph.D., Treatment Preceptor
Justin Thomas, M.D., Treatment Preceptor

Allentown: 1-866-249-6472
Steve Teders, Ph.D.

Sayre: 1-877-470-0920
Neil Donahue, MSW

Other CBOCs: Call your clinic

Why quit smoking?

- ❖ Smoking can lead to serious health complications. Here are some facts:

- An estimated 440,000 Americans die each year from diseases caused by smoking.
- Smoking is responsible for approximately 30% of cancer deaths in the U.S., and 87% of lung cancer deaths.
- About 20% of all deaths from heart disease in the U.S. are caused by smoking.
- More alcoholics die of smoking than of alcohol.
- Alcohol use is often involved in smoking relapses. Smokers who quit may be less likely to relapse to alcohol.

- ❖ Benefits of Quitting:

- Health Benefits:
 - Breathe better
 - Improve circulation
 - Reduce risk of cancer and heart disease
- Freedom from addiction
- Save money
- Increase energy
- Improved alcohol outcomes
- Live Longer!

Preparing Yourself to Quit

- ❖ Remove tobacco products from your environment (e.g., cigarettes, ashtrays, lighters).
- ❖ Tell family, friends, and coworkers about quitting and request understanding and support.
- ❖ Anticipate challenges to planned quit attempt, especially during the first few weeks (e.g., nicotine withdrawal symptoms).
- ❖ Develop strong personal reasons in addition to your health and obligations to others. For example, think of your improved ability to breathe, the money you will save, having more energy, and how much more active you will be. Post your reasons to quit in places that you typically smoke, and keep these reasons with you as well (e.g., in your wallet, purse).
- ❖ Decide positively that you want to quit. Try to avoid negative thoughts about how difficult it might be.

My Quit Date:

Last cigarette: 11:59
the night before

Quit Tips

1. Get rid of all cigarettes, ash trays, lighters, and matches (other than safety matches).
2. Avoid places that you smoke in, and people that you smoke with.
3. Take breaks in non-smoking places with non-smokers.
4. Get away from the table immediately after you eat and do something incompatible with smoking (e.g. walk, wash hands, do dishes, garden, hobbies, etc).
5. Keep handy a range of low calorie and non-edible smoking substitutes to use when you have an urge to smoke.
6. Tell every one you know that you are now smoke free, and thank them for their support.
7. Be good to yourself! Do something special and if possible try to reduce undo stress and demands for the day.
8. Review your reasons for quitting and agree to stay smoke free again for tomorrow.
9. You can cope with withdrawal symptoms by having a proper attitude about them. Remind yourself that: a) they are short-lived, temporary, and will pass; and b) they are normal and a sign that your body is adjusting and healing itself.